

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1           1. A method for obtaining an item, comprising:  
2           identifying a plurality of auctions in which an item is being auctioned; and  
3           automatically submitting one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of  
4           auctions in order to obtain the item.

1           2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically  
2           submitting one or more bids comprises:  
3           identifying one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest  
4           next bid price for the item,  
5           wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is  
6           based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular  
7           auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1           3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the step of automatically  
2           submitting one or more bids further comprises:  
3           determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
4           bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than  
5           the maximum bid price,  
6           submitting to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the  
7           lowest next bid price.

1           4. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the step of automatically  
2           submitting one or more bids further comprises:  
3           determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
4           bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
5           maximum bid price,

6           presenting an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the  
7           maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the  
8           lowest next bid price.

1           5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically  
2           submitting one or more bids further comprises:  
3           determining that a submitted bid has been surpassed; and  
4           automatically submitting another bid to at least one of the plurality of the  
5           plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1           6. A method according to Claim 5, wherein the step of automatically  
2           submitting another bid comprises:  
3           identifying one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest  
4           next bid price for the item,  
5           wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is  
6           based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular  
7           auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1           7. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the step of automatically  
2           submitting another bid further comprises:  
3           determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
4           bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than  
5           the maximum bid price,  
6           submitting to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the  
7           lowest next bid price.

1           8. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the step of automatically  
2           submitting another bid further comprises:

3           determining whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
4 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
5 maximum bid price,  
6           presenting an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the  
7 maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the  
8 lowest next bid price.

1           9. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:  
2           withdrawing a previously-submitted bid.

1           10. A method according to Claim 9, further comprising:  
2           determining that the bid price of the previously-submitted bid is greater  
3 than a sum of a next bid price of one of the plurality of auctions and a cost to  
4 withdraw the previously-submitted bid.

1           11. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically  
2 submitting one or more bids comprises:  
3           analyzing at least one of group bidding history and individual bidding  
4 history.

1           12. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically  
2 submitting one or more bids comprises:  
3           analyzing at least one of a bidding history for an item similar to the item, a  
4 bidding history for items complementary to the item, and a bidding history for  
5 items substitutable for the item.

1           13. A method according to Claim 3, wherein the maximum bid price is  
2 based on market factors.

1           14. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of automatically  
2 submitting one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of auctions comprises:  
3           automatically submitting one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of  
4 auctions in order to obtain more than one unit of the item.

1           15. A method for obtaining an item, comprising:  
2 identifying a plurality of items; and  
3           automatically submitting one or more bids to one or more auctions in order  
4 to obtain one of the items.

1           16. A method for obtaining an item, comprising:  
2 identifying an item; and  
3           automatically submitting one or more bids to one or more auctions in order  
4 to obtain a plurality of the item.

1           17. An apparatus, comprising:  
2 a processor; and  
3 a storage device in communication with said processor and storing  
4 instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
5           identify a plurality of auctions in which an item is being auctioned;  
6 and  
7           automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality  
8 of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1           18. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more  
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4           identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest next  
5 bid price for the item,

6                    wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item  
7                    is based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the  
8                    particular auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the  
9                    particular auction.

1                    19. An apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the stored instructions  
2                    adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more  
3                    bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4                    determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
5                    bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than  
6                    the maximum bid price,  
7                    submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the  
8                    lowest next bid price.

1                    20. An apparatus according to Claim 18, wherein the stored instructions  
2                    adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more  
3                    bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4                    determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
5                    bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
6                    maximum bid price,  
7                    present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the  
8                    maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the  
9                    lowest next bid price.

1                    21. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions  
2                    adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more  
3                    bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4                    determine that a submitted bid has been surpassed; and

5            automatically submit another bid to at least one of the plurality of the  
6 plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1            22. An apparatus according to Claim 21, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit another bid  
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4            identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a lowest next  
5 bid price for the item,  
6            wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is  
7 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular  
8 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1            23. An apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit another bid  
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4            determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
5 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not greater than  
6 the maximum bid price,  
7            submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based on the  
8 lowest next bid price.

1            24. An apparatus according to Claim 22, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit another bid  
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4            determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a maximum  
5 bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
6 maximum bid price,

7 present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than the  
8 maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than the  
9 lowest next bid price.

1 25. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor further comprise instructions adapted  
3 to be executed by said processor to withdraw a previously-submitted bid.

1 26. An apparatus according to Claim 25, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to withdraw a previously-submitted bid  
3 further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:

4 determine that the bid price of the previously-submitted bid is greater than  
5 a sum of a next bid price of one of the plurality of auctions and a cost to withdraw  
6 the previously-submitted bid.

1 27. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more  
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4 analyze at least one of group bidding history and individual bidding history.

1 28. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more  
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4 analyze at least one of a bidding history for an item similar to the item, a  
5 bidding history for items complementary to the item, and a bidding history for  
6 items substitutable for the item.

1 29. An apparatus according to Claim 19, wherein the maximum bid price  
2 is based on market factors.

1           30. An apparatus according to Claim 17, wherein the stored instructions  
2 adapted to be executed by said processor to automatically submit one or more  
3 bids further comprise instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
4           automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of  
5 auctions in order to obtain more than one unit of the item.

1           31. An apparatus, comprising:  
2           a processor; and  
3           a storage device in communication with said processor and storing  
4 instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
5           identify a plurality of items; and  
6           automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in  
7 order to obtain one of the items.

1           32. An apparatus, comprising:  
2           a processor; and  
3           a storage device in communication with said processor and storing  
4 instructions adapted to be executed by said processor to:  
5           identify an item; and  
6           automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in  
7 order to obtain a plurality of the item.

1           33. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process  
2 steps comprising:  
3           a step to identify a plurality of auctions in which an item is being  
4 auctioned; and  
5           a step to automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the  
6 plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.



1           34. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit one or more bids comprises:  
3           a step to identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a  
4 lowest next bid price for the item,  
5           wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is  
6 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular  
7 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1           35. A medium according to Claim 34, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit one or more bids further comprises:  
3           a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not  
5 greater than the maximum bid price,  
6           a step to submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based  
7 on the lowest next bid price.

1           36. A medium according to Claim 34, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit one or more bids further comprises:  
3           a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is  
5 greater than a maximum bid price,  
6           a step to present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than  
7 the maximum bid price and determining another maximum bid price greater than  
8 the lowest next bid price.

1           37. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit one or more bids further comprises:  
3           a step to determine that a submitted bid has been surpassed; and

4 a step to automatically submit another bid to at least one of the plurality of  
5 the plurality of auctions in order to obtain the item.

1 38. A medium according to Claim 37, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit another bid comprises:  
3 a step to identify one of the plurality of the plurality of auctions having a  
4 lowest next bid price for the item,  
5 wherein a next bid price in a particular auction for a particular item is  
6 based on a sum of a current bid price for the particular item in the particular  
7 auction and a minimum bidding increment associated with the particular auction.

1 39. A medium according to Claim 38, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit another bid further comprises:  
3 a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is not  
5 greater than the maximum bid price,  
6 a step to submit to the one auction a bid for the item, the bid being based  
7 on the lowest next bid price.

1 40. A medium according to Claim 38, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit another bid further comprises:  
3 a step to determine whether the lowest next bid price is greater than a  
4 maximum bid price; and, if it is determined that the lowest next bid price is  
5 greater than a maximum bid price,  
6 a step to present an indication that the lowest next bid price is greater than  
7 the maximum bid price and to determine another maximum bid price greater than  
8 the lowest next bid price.

1           41. A medium according to Claim 33, the process steps further  
2 comprising:  
3           a step to withdraw a previously-submitted bid.

1           42. A medium according to Claim 41, the process steps further  
2 comprising:  
3           a step to determine that the bid price of the previously-submitted bid is  
4 greater than a sum of a next bid price of one of the plurality of auctions and a  
5 cost to withdraw the previously-submitted bid.

1           43. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit one or more bids comprises:  
3           a step to analyze at least one of group bidding history and individual  
4 bidding history.

1           44. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit one or more bids comprises:  
3           a step to analyze at least one of a bidding history for an item similar to the  
4 item, a bidding history for items complementary to the item, and a bidding history  
5 for items substitutable for the item.

1           45. A medium according to Claim 35, wherein the maximum bid price is  
2 based on market factors.

1           46. A medium according to Claim 33, wherein the step to automatically  
2 submit one or more bids to a plurality of the plurality of auctions comprises:  
3           a step to automatically submit one or more bids to a plurality of the  
4 plurality of auctions in order to obtain more than one unit of the item.

1           47. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process  
2 steps comprising:  
3           a step to identify a plurality of items; and  
4           a step to automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in  
5 order to obtain one of the items.

1           48. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process  
2 steps comprising:  
3           a step to identify an item; and  
4           a step to automatically submit one or more bids to one or more auctions in  
5 order to obtain a plurality of the item.